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NOTES.

ON AN INSCRIPTION OF DODONA.¹

When Carapanos published the results of his excavations on the site of Dodona, he was of the opinion that, besides the numerous questions addressed to the oracle, he had also deciphered some half a dozen answers of the oracle itself from the leaden plates upon which they were both inscribed. The scholars who have since treated the subject have either disputed this conclusion altogether, or have deemed it possible rather than probable. In fact, the supposed answers are so fragmentary and so dubious as to court scepticism at once, as Carapanos now acknowledges; but he has succeeded recently in deciphering another plate which offers a reasonable ground for believing that at last an answer has been found. The question upon one side of the plate reads as follows:

θεό[ς], τύ[χα] ἀγα | θά· ἐρ[ωτ]εῖ Ἀντίο | χο[ς τὸ]ν Διὶ καὶ
τῶν | Διῶν[α]ν ὑπὲρ ὕμν | εἰας [α]ὐτοῦ καὶ πα | τρὸς καὶ
ἀδελφ | ἄς τ[ί]να θεῶν | ἧ ἡρ[ώ]ων τ[ι]μᾶν | τι λ[ώ]ιον καὶ
ᾧ | μείνον εἴη.

This is plain enough, and accords with the questions previously published. On the back of the same plate he finds the following:

ΕΙΣΕΡΜΙ
ΟΝΑ
ΟΡΜΑ
ΣΑ
ΑΝΤΙ

¹ The emendations in this note had been jotted down and its plan sketched out for some time, waiting leisure to be put into shape, when the Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift for Feb. 2d was received, containing an article by Th. Gomperz on the same subject, suggesting the same change of reading (ὁρμάσαντι), and alluding to Demeter Thermasia, but not touching other points. Such independent conjectures carry weight if they do not convince.—A. C. M.

Upon this he remarks, in the *Revue Archéologique*, Dec. 1883, p. 356:—Ce qui veut dire, traduit mot à mot, et en prenant le mot *ὀρμᾶσα* comme une forme de participe féminin, forme dorique, au lieu de *ὀρμῶσα*, signifierait: "A Hermione, à celle qui s'élance vis-a-vis." C'est une vraie réponse d'oracle, parce que, tout en étant claire, elle peut avoir un double sens; elle peut signifier: à Hermione même, à celle qui s'élançant de l'île d'Hydréa située en face et séparée par un étroit passage de mer; et elle peut aussi signifier: vis-a-vis d'Hermione, c'est-à-dire à Hydréa.

This explanation seems forced and unnatural; but the Greek can be made intelligible by a slight emendation, which may be the more readily offered, as the grammatical construction demands some change. To satisfy the meaning assigned by Carapanos we should read *εἰς Ἑρμιόνα[ν] ὀρμᾶσα[ν] ἀντί*, if the heroine is intended; but for the town, *εἰς Ἑρμιόνα ὀρμᾶσα[ν] ἀντί* will suffice. Instead of this, however, still assuming his construction of *ἀντί*, we may write *εἰς Ἑρμιόνα ὀρμᾶσα[ι] ἀντί*, "Hasten to Hermione opposite." One naturally thinks of the Argolic Hermione on the opposite side of Greece. Here was a famous temple of Demeter Thermasia (Paus. 2, 34, 11), whose appellative suggests warm curative springs, and there was another temple of the same goddess with the same epithet on the border between Hermione and Troezen (Paus. 2, 34, 6. Cf. Artemis Thermia at Thermae near Mytilene, Samml. Griech. Dial. Inscr. 257, 268, 259). The town also contained a shrine of Aesculapius, as may be inferred from the two inscriptions, C. I. G. 1198, 1222, and a sanctuary of Isis and Serapis, who was a god of healing, though this may be too late. Carapanos gives no epigraphic keys, except that *ο* occurs in the question, *ς* in the answer; *ε* in both. At all events, here was enough of doubt to leave a loophole of safety for the oracle in case its advice failed, not to mention several other deities worshipped there. Whether advantage might have been taken of the current proverb, *ἀνθ' Ἑρμιῶνος* (Suidas), we will not venture to say; but there was still another alternative, since Demeter and Kore possessed the surname Hermione at Syracuse (Hesychius), on the opposite coast from Epirus. But as the use of *ἀντί* in this sense is doubtful, we have merely to suppose that A has been (with oracular craft?) repeated, and read *εἰς Ἑρμιόνα ὀρμᾶσαντι*, when there results as apt an answer to the question of Antiochus as could well be desired, so far as the language is concerned, with all the ambiguity retained.

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